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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN PINELLAS COUNTY ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS



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The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the 2018 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

“Fortunately, Pinellas County is rich in partnerships and residents who are committed to developing innovative ways to improve the health of our communities,” said Dr. Ulyee Choe, director of DOH-Pinellas. “Thanks to these unique collaborations, we’ve made great strides in Pinellas; however, we need to continue to address areas of concern including health behaviors and the socioeconomic factors that have a profound effect on the health of our residents.”

Pinellas ranked 26th in health outcomes—how healthy its population is—and 23rd in length of life. In 2017, Pinellas ranked 28th in health outcomes and 29th in longevity among Florida’s 67 counties.

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local governments, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Pinellas County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

In Pinellas County, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress. Reducing infant mortality and increasing behaviors that improve chronic disease health outcomes are among the initiatives in the DOH-Pinellas CHIP.

In September, the Pinellas County Commission gave unanimous approval to provide additional funding to help pay for putting a nurse in public schools throughout the county.

“Funding nurses in schools will make a significant difference in the lives of children in Pinellas,” said Pinellas County Commission Vice Chair Karen Seel. “By working with our partners, we are ensuring better health for students now and in the future.”

Another collaboration to note is an on-going partnership between DOH-Pinellas and the Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force-Pinellas Chapter, as well as the support of numerous community partners. The Florida Healthy Babies Initiative in Pinellas County continues its progress towards

reducing infant deaths, closing the black-white infant mortality gap, and improving health outcomes for all babies in Pinellas County. To name a few of the 2017 achievements, more than 120 child care facilities and family child care homes were trained on the importance of breastfeeding and more than 250 physicians and nurses were trained on breastfeeding and safe sleep.

The 2018 Community Health Action Team, which oversees the Pinellas CHIP, is scheduled to commence this summer. The latest health rankings will help determine which areas will be of focus for the community.

To explore more health indicators in your county, visit www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

About the Florida Department of Health

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